

DOCUMENT RESUME

08035 - [C34885P9]

**[Reimbursement of Travel Expenses while on Leave]. B-189268.
December 12, 1978. 2 pp.**

**Decision re: Patricia Stolfa; Davra Eloon; by Robert F. Keller,
Deputy Comptroller General.**

**Contact: Office of the General Counsel; Personnel Law Matters I.
Organization Concerned: Community Services Administration.
Authority: 24 Comp. Gen. 443. B-185076 (1976).**

Reconsideration was requested of a decision which held that employees whose annual leave was interrupted to perform temporary duty at another location and who returned to the place where they were on leave were entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses attributable to the temporary duty but not to the cost of returning to headquarters from the leave point. An official's statement that employees were requested, before their departure on annual leave, to interrupt their leave to perform official duties did not change the conclusion of the prior decision since the controlling reasons for the trips were personal rather than official. (BTW)

DECISION

J. Botelma
PLAZ

**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548**

8589

FILE: B-189265

DATE: DEC 12 1978

MATTER OF: Patricia Stolfa and Devra Bloom - Travel Expenses
While on Leave

DIGEST: Employees, who while on annual leave away from their headquarters were requested to perform temporary duty at another location, and who returned to the place where they were on leave are entitled only to reimbursement of travel expenses attributable to the temporary duty and not to the cost of returning to their headquarters from the leave point.

This action is in response to a request for reconsideration of Matter of Patricia Stolfa and Devra Bloom, B-189265, September 21, 1977. In that decision we stated that Ms. Stolfa and Ms. Bloom, whose annual leave was temporarily interrupted to perform temporary duty at another location and who returned to the place where they were on leave, were entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses attributable to the temporary duty but not to the cost of returning to their headquarters from the leave point.

One of the employees, Ms. Patricia Stolfa, had traveled to Denver, Colorado, on December 19, 1976, in a leave status. Orders were signed on December 23, 1976, directing her to perform temporary duty at Fort Lupton, Colorado, on January 3, 1977. Ms. Stolfa traveled to Fort Lupton and returned to Denver on the same day. The following day, January 4, 1977, she performed official business in Denver and departed the next morning for Washington, D.C., her official duty station.

The second employee, Ms. Devra Bloom, was in Fort Lauderdale on annual leave when orders were signed on June 23, 1975, directing her to perform official business in Miami on June 30, 1975. Ms. Bloom traveled to and from Miami on June 30, 1975, and resumed her leave status the next day.

Both employees were reimbursed for their return air fare to Washington, D.C. We directed that action should be taken to recover those amounts since the general rule is that when an employee proceeds to a point away from his official duty station on annual leave, he assumes the obligation of returning at his own expense, B-182499, January 19, 1976. Also, it repeatedly has been held that if, during such leave or at the expiration

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thereof, the employee is required to perform duty either at his leave point or some other point prior to his returning to headquarters, the Government is chargeable only with the difference between the cost attributable to the temporary duty and what it would have cost the employee to return to his headquarters direct from the place where he was on leave. B-185070, April 13, 1976.

We held in 24 Comp. Gen. 443 (1944) that an employee who was authorized prior to departure on annual leave from his headquarters, to proceed on official travel from the place of leave to a temporary duty station and return to his headquarters is entitled to be paid traveling expenses not to exceed what would have been incurred had he traveled directly from headquarters to the temporary duty station. In that case the agency had made the determination to authorize the official travel without regard to or knowledge of the employee's leave plans.

In this request for reconsideration, the certifying officer has forwarded a memorandum from Jack Ramsey, Chief, Special Programs, Office of Operations in which he states that he requested both employees to interrupt their annual leave to perform official Community Services Administration business prior to their departure on annual leave. We do not consider Mr. Ramsey's memorandum sufficient to bring these employees' cases within the purview of 24 Comp. Gen. 443, supra. It is evident from the record here that the controlling reason for the trips was personal and that the official business--for a day or less--was authorized because the agency was aware the employees would be in the vicinity on annual leave. In those circumstances, the travel expenses in question may not be allowed.

R.F.KELLER

Deputy Comptroller General
of the United States